

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAM-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

OMB-01 DRC-01 NIC-01 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 AID-20 /128 W
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O R 201652Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 575

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4064

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POSTERS CALLING FOR PRO-SPINOLA RALLY APPEAR

REF: A) LISBON 3907

B) LISBON 3862

C) LISBON 4013

SUMMARY: ANONYMOUS POSTERS HAVE BEGUN APPEARING IN LISBON CALLING FOR PRO-SPINOLA, ANTI-EXTREMIST RALLY ON UNSPECIFIED DATE IN FUTURE. JUNTA MEMBER GALVAO DE MELO AMONG PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS OF RALLY. IF RALLY HELD, DANGERS OF POLARIZATION OF ARMED FORCES WOULD INCREASE AS WOULD POSSIBILITIES OF POWER GRAB BY PRO- OR ANTI-SPINOLA FORCES. END SUMMARY.

1. DOWNTOWN LISBON AWOKE MORNING SEP 19 TO FIND WALLS OF BUILDINGS PLASTERED WITH GREEN POSTERS BEARING STYLIZED FEATURELESS FIGURE OF MAN IDENTIFIED AS "SILENT MAJORITY." TEXT OF POSTER READS "RALLY IN SUPPORT OF GENERAL
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SPINOLA: NO TO EXTREMISTS, YES TO FIRMNESS AND FIDELITY

TO PROGRAM OF ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT." POSTER GAVE NO TIME OR DATE FOR RALLY, NOR INDICATION AS TO SPONSOR.

2. PRESS REPORTS 50,000 OF THESE POSTERS AND SOME HALF-MILLION HANDBILLS WITH SAME MESSAGE PRINTED, AND SPECULATES THAT AN ENTITY TO WHICH PROMINENT OLD REGIME FIGURES LINKED RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCING THIS POSTER CAMPAIGN. PRESS ALSO REPORTS INCIDENTS BETWEEN "DOZENS OF BODYGUARDS" OF THOSE PUTTING UP POSTERS IN EARLY HOURS OF MORNING AND "DEMOCRATIC" BYSTANDERS, INCIDENTS WHICH RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND ALLEGATIONS THAT PISTOLS WERE BRANDISHED.

3. PRESS BILLING POSTERS AS MANEUVER BY "REACTIONARY PROVOCATEURS" TO ABUSIVELY AND IRRESPONSIBLY COMPROMISE NAME OF PRESIDENT SPINOLA AND ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM). SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER REPUBLICA ALLEGES THAT AMONG THOSE BEHIND CAMPAIGN IS FRANCISCO HIPOLITO RAPOSO, A RELATIVE OF THE EDITOR OF INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE WEEKLY TEMPO NOVO, SUSPENDED RECENTLY FOR 60 DAYS BY ORDER OF AFM (SEPTTEL).

4. LISBON PRESS REFUSED TO PRINT PAID ANNOUNCEMENTS SENT IT BY PROMOTERS REGARDING DETAILS OF RALLY. ALTHOUGH NO DATE GIVEN FOR RALLY, PPD SOURCES BELIEVE IT WILL BE CALLED FOR SEP 23 BUT OTHER SOURCES CAST DOUBT ON THIS. NEITHER PPD NOR ANY OTHER PARTY HAS COME OUT PUBLICLY IN SUPPORT OF RALLY, ALTHOUGH PPD REPORTS BEING ASKED BUT REFUSED TO SEND REPS TO A COORDINATING MEETING RECENTLY.

5. BEFORE POSTERS APPEARED, EMBOFFS TOLD BY LEADING FIGURE IN OLD REGIME THAT MASSIVE PRO-SPINOLA RALLY IN WORKS. DATE CONTEMPLATED WAS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, AND WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED FATIMA CELEBRATIONS IN WHICH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF FAITHFUL EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE. IDEA PLANNED WAS TO BILL RALLY AS FOR "FATIMA AND PATRIA," YET EFFECTIVELY TURN IT INTO PRO-PRESIDENT DEMONSTRATION. OUR SOURCE COMPLAINED THAT OTHERS HAD SEIZED UPON IDEA AND IN AMATEUR FASHION WERE RUINING A GOOD IDEA BY HEAVY-HANDEDLY EMPHASIZING PRO-SPINOLA NATURE OF IT.
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6. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS FROM JUNTA MEMBER GEN. GALVAO DE MELO THAT HE ONE OF PRINCIPAL BEHIND-THE-SCENES PROMOTERS OF IDEA OF PRO-SPINOLA RALLY, AND THAT HOPES ARE FOR HALF-MILLION TURNOUT. HE CONFIRMED INFO CONTAINED IN ONE MIMEOGRAPHED BROCHURE THAT ONE OF THEMES OF DEMONSTRATION WOULD BE RETURN TO ORIGINAL SPINOLA DECOLONIZATION FORMULA (I.E., REFERENDUM WITH

VARIETY OF OPTIONS INCLUDING INDEPENDENCE BUT ALSO INCLUDING FEDERATION WITH PORTUGAL). GALVAO DE MELO AFFIRMED THAT AIM IS NOT TO ALTER AGREED-UPON DECOLONIZATION FORMULA FOR MOZAMBIQUE BUT TO ENSURE THAT REFERENDUM ROUTE FOLLOWED IN ANGOLA.

7. COMMENT: GIVEN FACT THAT GALVAO DE MELO ASSOCIATED WITH RALLY, IT LIKELY THAT PRESIDENT SPINOLA HAS GIVEN AT LEAST TACIT APPROVAL OF DEMONSTRATION. THIS IS UNFORTUNATE IN TWO RESPECTS. FIRST, IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT SUPPORTERS OF RALLY HAVE CHOSEN TO USE ANONYMOUS POSTERS TO PROMOTE IT, SINCE METHOD RAISES NATURAL SUSPICIONS (WHICH THE LEFT EXPLOITING) THAT "FASCISTS" ARE BEHIND RALLY, WHICH TARNISHES SPINOLA'S IMAGE. IT ALSO GIVES NATURAL OPENING TO OPPONENTS TO SABOTAGE RALLY BEFORE IT CAN BE HELD.

8. SECONDLY, RALLY HAS POTENTIAL TO LEAD TO CONFRONTATION WITHIN ARMED FORCES OF PRO- AND ANTI-SPINOLA ELEMENTS. IN RECENT DAYS, PRESIDENT SEEMS TO HAVE GAINED GROUND VIS-A-VIS HIS PRINCIPAL RIVALS IN AFM COORDINATING COMMITTEE, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO DECOLONIZATION POLICY, A MAIN AREA OF DISAGREEMENT. AS A RESULT OF RECENT MOZAMBIQUE EVENTS. PRESIDENT CAN POINT TO ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF WHAT IN HIS VIEW WAS A PRECIPITATE HAND-OVER OF POWER TO FRELIMO. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WILL OVERSEE ANGOLAN DECOLONIZATION (REF A) AND IN THAT REGARD CREATED A DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE UNDER HIS AEGIS (REF B) AND FLEW OFF TO DISCUSS ANGOLA WITH MOBUTU (REF C). IT IS UNFORTUNATE BUT APPEARS TO BE TRUE THAT SPINOLA UNWILLING TO ACCEPT ONLY A RELATIVE POWER ADVANTAGE OVER THOSE HE CONSIDERS HIS RIVALS. HE GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING INFLEXIBLE, OF BEING UNSATISFIED
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AND UNCOMFORTABLE WITH ONLY PARTIAL CONTROL OF SITUATION. ATTEMPT TO HOLD A LARGE PRO-SPINOLA RALLY AT THIS SENSITIVE POLITICAL MOMENT COULD HAVE UNFORTUNATE RESULTS WHATEVER ITS DEGREE OF SUCCESS: A FLOP WOULD STRENGTHEN ANTI-SPINOLISTAS WHO WOULD ARGUE THAT PRESIDENT'S POPULAR SUPPORT WEAK; A HUGE TURNOUT MIGHT PRECIPITATE AN ATTEMPT BY SPINOLA FORCES TO ABOLISH COORDINATING COMMITTEE. IN EITHER CASE RESULTANT POLARIZATION OPENS UP DANGEROUS POSSIBILITY OF CLASH WITHIN ARMED FORCES, ABOUT WHICH ONE HEARS PERSISTENT (BUT UNCONFIRMED) RUMORS THESE DAYS. A CLASH COULD LEAD TO A RIGHT OR LEFT DICTATORSHIP AND SQUELCH HOPES FOR BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL.
SCOTT

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